DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 207 076 CS 206 590

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TITLE Subscribers' Reaction to Redesign of the St. Cloud Daily Times [and] Understanding the Research Process. ANPA News Research Report No. 32.
INSTITUTION American Newspaper Publishers Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 3 Sep 81
NOTE 13p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Case Studies; *Design Preferences; Graphic Arts; *Layout (Publications); *Media Research; *Newspapers; Publishing Industry; *Research Methodology
IDENTIFIERS Reader Response

ABSTRACT

The two sections of this report focus on recent research in the newspaper industry. The first section describes changes implemented in the design and layout of a Minnesota daily newspaper and the methodology and results of two surveys of readers' favorable reactions to the changes. The second section is designed to familiarize newspaper people with the basic steps in the research process and with some key concepts and terms used in that process. It uses a survey of editorial readership to provide sample data. (HTH)

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American Newspaper Publishers Association

ANPA NEWS RESEARCH REPORT

FROM THE ANPA NEWS RESEARCH CENTER No. 32 Sept. 3, 1981

A REPORT FOR EDITORS PROVIDED IN COORDINATION WITH THE NEWSPAPER READERSHIP COUNCIL

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Subscribers' Reaction to Redesign of the St. Cloud Daily Times

By Mario R. Garcia, J. W. Click and Guido H. Stempel III

HIGHLIGHTS: Redesign of the entire St. Cloud Daily Times is a case study in newspaper graphics and the use of survey research to determine subscribers' reactions to the changes in their daily newspaper. More than two-thirds of the subscribers interviewed in two surveys thought the new Daily Times looked better than before. Reaction to 10 specific aspects of the change also was generally positive. Most subscribers thought eight of the changes were for the better; and for the remaining two, most were undecided or had no opinion. Only a small number of subscribers thought that any of the changes were for the worse.

Understanding the Research Process

By Elsa Mohn

HIGHLIGHTS: While the language of research is familiar to some editors and publishers, it is quite unfamiliar to others. This essay familiarizes newspaper people with the basic steps in the research process and with some of the key concepts and terms used in that process. It is a useful guide for the consumer of research.

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American Newspaper Publishers Association
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Subscribers' Reaction to Redesign of the St. Cloud Daily Times

By Mario R. Garcia, J. W. Click and Guido H. Stempel III

Mario Garcia is an associate professor at Syracuse University. J. W. Click and Guido Stempel III are professors at Ohio University. *This study was partially funded by the ANPA News Research Center.*

Neither size, nor conservative readership nor location within the shadow of a metropolitan daily need stay the redesign of a newspaper seeking a modern face.

But be wary of tampering with symbols that long have identified the newspaper in readers' minds. The St. Cloud Daily Times saw its flag-dominating eagle take flight and perch demurely at the side of the page. Readers scowled.

Those are some of the lessons learned in the front-to-back redesign of the Daily Times to give it more appeal to the approximately 42,000 people who call St. Cloud, Minnesota home.

The city, located 68 miles from Minneapolis, is primarily a farming and retail center. The readership, with its high concentration of German Catholics, is described by most Daily Times staffers as conservative. Voter registration is evenly split between the Republican and Democratic parties. Suburban St. Cloud is almost exclusively Republican.

The staff of the newspaper is predominatly young and eager to produce a better newspaper. Their en-

The St. Cloud Daily Times
A Gannett Newspaper
Quie calls session on heating aid
Region farm land values up markedly
Western DC-10 crashes in fog at Mexico City
Eight die as storms cross Plains
'Lightning Lou' returns
Loehr lets pay go up, chides Murphy
Inside

This is a front page of the St. Cloud Daily Times before the redesign. Notice use of art deco style eagle for nameplate, along with Old English typeface. Although the newspaper had switched to a six-column format, movement was almost exclusively vertical.

Election 1980
Carter campaign wants Kennedy people out /8
Chicago mayor backs Kennedy /8
Draft committee shuts doors /29
October 31, 1979
St. Cloud Daily Times
Quie calls session on heating
Loehr: favors pay increase, calls veto 'pure politics'
Region's farm land values up
DC-10 crashes in fog at airport in Mexico City
Eight killed as storms cross Plains
In The Times TODAY
Mid-Minnesota holiday food
Ghost of heroin haunts house
Index

New front page uses Bookman Bold for nameplate. The box-within-a-box concept establishes continuity for every standing head throughout the newspaper. Teaser headlines are used above nameplate. The modular patterns emphasize horizontal and vertical movement. An index runs horizontally at bottom of front page.

thusiasm prompted a group of editors, led by News Editor John Bodette, to form a "Redesign Committee." The group spent months analyzing the newspaper and seeking graphic ideas to improve appearance. But Bodette and Editor Don Casey realized that their in-house efforts to redesign the paper were hampered by the lack of a sense of direction.

At this point, Garcia became involved as design consultant. He examined a two-week sampling of the newspaper, usually an adequate period to observe a publication's daily high and low graphic moments. Reading the editions also permitted a basic undertanding of the news content, the editor's philosophy in terms of news, photo and art choices, and the way these are organized throughout the newspaper.

But one cannot redesign a newspaper without experiencing the environment in which it is published. The lifestyles of readers often become the most vital clue to the graphic appearance the newspaper should have. After visiting St. Cloud, Garcia concluded that readers would tolerate greater typographic changes in their newspaper than the editors had assumed. St. Cloud's proximity to Minneapolis, with its educational and cultural opportunities, gave Daily Times' readers more sophistication than their counterparts in towns similar in size, but more removed from a major city.

Redesigning the Newspaper

This view of the audience led to the first redesign strategy—the box within a box graphic concept—which serves as the primary element of visual continuity for the Daily Times.

Before redesign, the newspaper had not considered visual continuity—the use of the same typographic strategy from page to page—an important

New sections, like this Business/farm section, were started when new design emerged. Notice packaging of copy and photos; effective packaging of short business news and use of art to identify stories.

Today is the name assigned to page 2 of the newspaper. It is a "reading" page, with packages for in the nation, in the world, in Minnesota, in the weather and people.

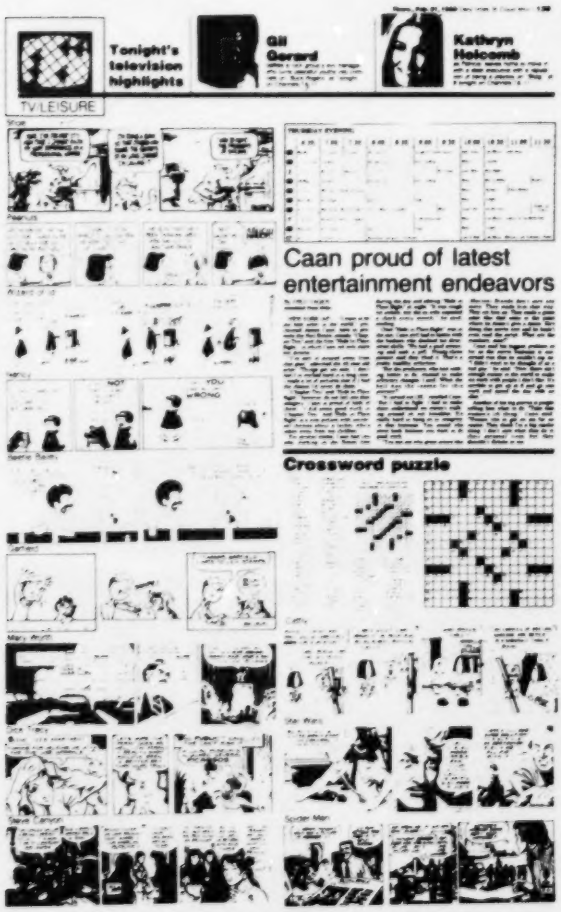
graphic and organizational tool. Instead, every standing logo throughout the newspaper carried a different typeface and strategy. The flag displayed a spreading and graphically overwhelming eagle, which became the greatest source of irritation and delays as the redesign efforts proceeded.

In St. Cloud, the eagle had "earned" its wings through more than a century of exposure, sitting atop the front page, gazing steadily toward the reader and presiding over the major headline of the day.

It is no wonder that the publisher and many of the editors developed a normal case of cold feet when it came time to dethrone the visual element that had become a graphic link to its readers. Thus, the eagle lives. A more contemporary eagle—and a less overpowering one—now sits quietly at a corner of the flag, visual testimony to a newspaper's and a town's tradition. The new nameplate is a graphic exercise in compromise, using the eagle as a link to a rich past while introducing the lines and white space of contemporary newspaper design. Bookman Bold, a rich, readable and attractive typeface has replaced Old English in the flag.

Typographically, the Daily Times switched to combinations of Helvetica Bold, Medium and Light for headlines. Helvetica Black is utilized for all standing heads. Bylines and cutlines provide contrast through the use of sans serif light and bold.

Different strategies for headline placement allow the editors greater design freedom and better utilization of space. Some headlines run at the side of short stories. Others use a tripod combination—one word set in bold large type, accompanied by two smaller lines of a lightface version of the same typeface.



This page highlights television programs, along with comic strips and a crossword puzzle. The idea was to present the reader all of his "leisure" reading in one page.

Even the classified page received the impact of the redesign. Notice the box-within-a-box strategy used at top of page. Index to classified section was redesigned to include larger type and easier-to-find categories.

An analysis of the newspaper's page organization and content resulted in restructuring for better packaging and even created new sections: Food/Consumer, Bulletin Board, Business/Farm, Leisure/TV. In addition, an effort has been made to emphasize more of the local reporting, which often was neglected or underplayed.

The redesign of the Daily Times is based on a simple philosophy: make it easy to find, easy to read and pleasant to look at.

To accomplish the first of these three mandates, "teaser" heads over the nameplate, set in Helvetica Light, were developed. Teasers tell the hurried reader where to find major stories that didn't quite make the front page. In addition, there is a graphic display calling attention to the three or four major features on inside sections, e.g., lifestyle, sports, food.

People page displays use of photo essay, more white space and the same standards of continuity.

To make the material easy to read, the editors emphasized more use of modular packages, which maintain all copy and photos related to one story within a vertical or horizontal module. Few, if any, stories turn and twist around the page. Related stories are kept together, preferably on the same page, as part of the same graphic package. Charts, direct quotes and rules are used to guide the reader through long stories, or those with complicated content.

To make the content more pleasant to look at, every editor at the Daily times has been trained to think in terms of graphics, to invite the reader into each page with attractive, provocative and orderly use of photos, type and illustrations. Editors are asked to recreate a sense of graphic identity and consistency through every page of the newspaper, everyday.

How Readers Reacted

An important question for any newspaper when it undertakes a major redesign is, "What will our readers think?" Previous research does not offer many answers. Click and Stempel in ANPA News Research Report No. 22 reported that there was no correlation between rate of adoption of modern format and circulation gain or loss. That seems to confirm what many have observed—that some newspapers are helped by format changes and some are hurt.

But circulation trends are at best an indirect indication of reader reaction. What is called for is a direct assessment, and that has rarely, if ever, been done by a newspaper when it changed format. In the case of the Daily Times, however, a direct measure was obtained at the exact time of the change and then followed up three weeks later. This was done by telephone surveys of two random samples of subscribers.

The first survey was begun February 21, 1980, the day the first issue of the redesigned newspaper appeared, and was completed the next day. We reached 183 subscribers, but 21 of them had not had a chance to look at the newspaper. The second survey was begun March 11 and was completed the following day. We completed interviews with 179 persons.

The first survey obtained immediate reaction to the overall different appearance and to 10 specific changes. The specific survey questions are in Table 1. The second survey measured reaction after readers had more time to become familiar with the changes. We assumed that the reaction might be a little more clear-cut the second time.

Initial acceptance of the change was high. In the first survey, 69 percent of the readers said the newspaper looked better, and, as Table 1 indicates, a majority supported all but three of the changes. The three exceptions were the changes in the nameplate, the classi-

Table 1

Reader Reaction to the Redesign of the St. Cloud Daily Times

	February 21-22			March 11-12		
	B	W	DK	B	W	DK
Overall, do you think the Daily Times the way it is today looks better or worse than the way it was before?	69%	11%	20%	70%	12%	18%
Do you think the front page of the Daily Times looks better or worse than the front page the way it was before?	59%	19%	22%	64%	16%	21%
The nameplate on the newspaper's name on the front page has been changed. Is that better or worse?	47%	27%	26%	47%	17%	36%
The comics and television listings are now together in the same section. Is that better or worse?	56%	7%	37%	62%	1%	37%
At the top and bottom of the front page, there are brief summaries of stories on other pages. Is that better or worse?	82%	6%	12%	85%	4%	11%
Ann Landers, Heloise and the doctor's column are now all on the same page. Is that better or worse?	80%	0%	20%	84%	1%	16%
All the stories that are continued from the front page are continued to the same page. Is that better or worse?	81%	2%	17%	83%	3%	13%
There are more pictures and other illustrations than there used to be. Is that better or worse?	79%	4%	17%	74%	5%	21%
The design of the classified advertising pages has been changed. Is that better or worse?	27%	4%	69%	43%	7%	50%
The way advertising is placed on each page has been changed. Is that better or worse?	33%	4%	64%	47%	4%	49%
The type used in headlines has been changed. Is that better or worse?	73%	4%	22%	77%	3%	20%
Information about meetings and other community activities is now grounded on the bulletin board page. Is that better or worse?				84%	1%	15%
There is now a business section each Saturday. Is that better or worse?				57%	1%	42%
B—Better; W—Worse; DK—Undecided or don't know		N = 162			N = 179	

fied advertising pages and the layout of display ads on pages. In each case, more respondents favored than opposed the changes, but a large number were undecided. In the case of the classified advertising pages, 69 percent were undecided, which is remarkable considering how marked the change was.

As antiticpated, the change of the nameplate was the most controversial change, being opposed by 27 percent of the respondents. It was, however, favored by 47 percent, while 26 percent were undecided.

The most popular change was the use of "teaser" heads on page one to help readers find stories elsewhere in the newspaper. This was supported by 82 percent of the readers. Also, there was high endorsement of the grouping of Ann Landers, Heloise and the doctor's column, the placement of all jumps on the same page and the increased use of pictures and other illustrations.

A Followup Survey

The second survey, which asked the same questions, showed higher acceptance on 10 of the 11 items. But most of the differences were small and not statistically significant.

It is important to note, however, that acceptance was as high or higher three weeks later. There is always the possibility that initial response is influenced by the novelty of the situation. What the second survey confirmed was that the Redesign Committee and the designer really had created a newspaper that was more enjoyable to look at and easier to use.

The big gains were on the change in design of the classified advertising pages and the placement of display advertising. Many were undecided about these changes in the first survey. Half the respondents were still undecided in the second survey, but that was a sub-

stantial drop and the movement was almost entirely to the favorable side.

There were still substantial numbers of undecided respondents on the nameplate, the grouping of the comics and television listings, and on the new Saturday business section. The business section appeared only three times prior to the second survey. Readers probably were not familiar enough with it to make a judgment.

The proportion of undecided subscribers actually increased on the nameplate change, but the movement was from disapproval to undecided, suggesting that acceptance was coming gradually.

Perhaps the most perplexing finding was that 37 were undecided about the placing of the comics and the television listings in the same section. Obviously, this change had been noticed. Respondents had found the comics and the television listings. It is impossible to imagine otherwise. Perhaps the answer is that respondents always did know where these two popular parts of the paper were. Grouping them did not increase the convenience of these items or help persons to find them who had overlooked them before.

Conclusions

Overall, the survey findings confirm the judgment of the Redesign Committee and the designer. Immediate acceptance by most readers of the new design proved the correctness of the basic strategy of improving the appearance and at the same time offering a more convenient-to-use news package. Readers were aware of obvious changes, such as the nameplate underwent; and they noticed more subtle differences such as placing all jumps on the same page and the grouping of material of similar content.

To other newspapers which are considering format change, this case study offers specific evidence of what to expect in the way of reader reaction. This is not to suggest that further studies are not needed. When a newspaper changes format, it should seek reader response.

St. Cloud thus becomes a model for other small dailies—a model of how to go about the redesign and how to assess that redesign. The high reader acceptance makes it a model of success as well. ■

Understanding the Research Process

By Elsa Mohn

Formerly a senior analyst in the research department of The Minneapolis Star and Tribune Company, Elsa Mohn now is a research assistant in the ANPA News Research Center at Syracuse University where she is pursuing graduate work. This essay on understanding the research process was selected as the winner in a graduate student competition held by Dr. Edna Einsiedel in the School of Public Communications at Syracuse University.

Some editors and publishers have no problem digesting research. Some even regard terms like confidence intervals, random sampling and p values as everyday language. Others, however, are more unfamiliar with research. This discussion is primarily intended for the latter group. However, people in the former category might also find it of interest.

Basically, research is concerned with three things:

- Estimations
- Relationships
- Significance

The only reason it bothers with these things is because people ask questions.

That is what research essentially is—a tool for answering questions that people ask. Some examples of questions that editors and publishers might ask are: WHO is and is not reading our newspaper? WHAT is the effect of attitudes toward our newspaper on reading behavior? WHEN did subscribers actually decide to take our newspaper? WHERE are our readers going? WHY is circulation going down? HOW do carriers feel about their job?

Research is a tool for answering questions just like a watch is a tool for telling time. And, like a watch, it is very intricate. Research is full of statistics and strict scientific method the way a Swiss movement watch is full of wheels and springs, all working together in harmony to produce the correct information. A watch is used to tell time because it is presumed that there is some order in the world and, thus, it is worthwhile to know what time it is. This order to time was discerned thousands of years ago. Social research—a progeny of the twentieth century—assumes likewise: there is order and purpose to the way people behave. Similarly, physical scientists assume there is order to the way the physical world behaves.

But just as the springs on a watch break and you cannot tell time if something goes awry in research, you cannot be assured of confidence in the results. And that is basically why researchers talk about p values and t tests and sample error: to let you know the research is telling you the right time, so to speak. They want to let you know, with as little of a shadow of a doubt as possible, that the results from the research are answering your question.

The gist of this discussion is conceptual, not mathematical. It is intended to make people in the newspaper business more comfortable with research, both actively, in commissioning research projects, and passively, in consuming research reports and articles that happen to come across their desk.

On the one hand, people in the newspaper business are quite familiar with the opinions of more outspoken members of their audience via letters to the editor and circulation figures. On the other hand, research is a way for the newspaper to solicit responses from its readers (and non-readers, too) in a systematic, reliable way to focused questions that need answers.

The Research Process

All research (whether physical or social) moves through the same basic four-step process. It starts with a substantive question, moves on to a statistical/methodological question, obtains statistical results, which are interpreted into the substantive answers to the initial question.

An example of this process:

• Substantive Question: How many of our readers regularly read the editorial page? And who are they?

• Statistical/Methodological Question: How can this substantive question be answered? Solution: Survey a random sample of 500 adult readers, 18 years of age or older, asking them how frequently they read the editorial page, how old they are, and what was the last grade of education they completed.

• Statistical Conclusion: Forty-three percent of our readers read the editorial page regularly, with p less than .05 for both age and education(Table 1).

• Substantive Conclusion: It can be said with 95 percent confidence that between 38 and 48 percent of our readers read the editorial pages regularly. Further, these editorial page readers are more likely to be older and more educated than readers of our newspaper who do not regularly read the editorials.

Random Sampling

This simple example exhibits some of the more important research concepts: estimation, relationship and significance based on a random sample. We could have estimation, relationship and significance based

on a sample that was other than random, but in that case, we would be unsure of whether or not the results were reflective of all readers, and thus the question would not have been answered. That is the beauty of a random sample. It is reflective of the total population. In this instance, the total population is readers of the newspaper.

Samples are required because to survey all readers would be very costly and time-consuming. A random sample tells you basically the same thing as a census would about a population. Further, the larger your sample, the more likely it is to reflect the population you wish to know something about. (There is, however, a point of diminishing return which is at about a sample size of 1,500. That is, a sample size of 2,000 will tell you very little more about your population than a sample size of 1,500, regardless of the size of your population.)

A random sample simply indicates that each person who is a member of the population you wish to know something about is as likely to be a member of the sample as any other person in the population. When you go to the doctor, he draws a sample of your blood. He doesn't need *all* of your blood in order to tell you something. You notice that the doctor uses special equipment and draws your blood under certain conditions. You might be very apprehensive about the results of the blood test if your blood was drawn under less than hygienic conditions. Similarly, you should be concerned about a sample that was drawn under less than random conditions. Randomization describes the conditions under which the sample was drawn.

The importance of a random sample should not be underestimated. If a sample is less than random, the reader of the research should approach the results with caution since the results might not be reflective of the population from which the sample was supposedly drawn. Clearly, a random sample is the starting point for being able to make generalizations from findings in a sample to the population one wishes to know something about.

Because we have a random sample, we can make an estimation about the population. In the example, we estimated that 43 percent of the adult readers of the newspaper read the editorials regularly. If more precision is needed about the estimation, we can estimate an interval within which the readership of editorials is likely to fall: we can say with 95 percent confidence that between 38 and 48 percent of the adult readers of the newspaper read the editorial pages regularly.

This margin of error is called a *confidence interval* and is also sometimes referred to as *sampling error*. It is frequently used in political polls. For instance, The New York Times/CBS conducted 1,065 telephone interviews among adult men and women across the United States between April 10 and April 14, 1980. The New York Times, Friday, April 18, 1980, states that ". . . one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results based on the entire sample differ by no more than three percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained by interviewing all adult Americans."

In this poll, 43 percent of the adults surveyed indicated that if the election were held tomorrow they would vote for President Carter. Using the confidence interval, this New York Times/CBS poll is 95 percent certain that the percentage of Americans who would vote for Carter if the election were held tomorrow would be between 40 and 46 percent.

Generally speaking, the larger the sample, the smaller the confidence interval. For instance, if this poll had interviewed only 500 people as opposed to slightly over 1,000, the margin of error would be more than plus or minus three percent. It would have been somewhere around plus or minus five percent. Thus, all other things being equal, the poll would have been 95 percent sure that the percentage of Americans who would vote for Carter if the election were held tomorrow would be between 38 and 48 percent, a 10 percent spread as opposed to the six percent spread achieved with the larger sample size.

Significance and Relationships

Just as sampling and randomness go hand in hand, significance and relationships go hand in hand. When we talk about relationships, we mean the relationship between one variable and another variable. In Table 1 there is a relationship between two variables: readership of editorials and age of the reader. The question is: Is there a significant relationship between these two variables? This is what the "p value" is all about. In our example of editorial readership and age, the chances are less than five out of one hundred that there is no statistically significant relationship between editorial readership and age of the reader. Or, another way to put it is the chances are 95 out of one hundred that there *is* a statistically significant relationship between editorial readership and age.

This p value (p stands for probability) is the statistical answer to the substantive question "Who is reading editorials?" If the p value had been .50 instead of .05, we would have said the chances are only 50-50 that there is a difference in readership of editorials among different age groups. Or, in other words, probably not: the audience of the editorial page is everyone in general—young people are as likely to read the editorial pages as are older persons. The p of .05, however, does not tell you what the relationship is between the variables. After finding the p significant, then look at the numbers from which the p was calculated to find out what is happening: in this case p is significant be-

cause the older readers are more likely to read the editorials regularly than the younger readers, 49 percent versus 29 percent, respectively.

Whenever it is desired to know the relationship between variables, the p value enters the scene. However, it is calculated in different ways depending upon the type of information it is being calculated from. For the cross-tabulation of age and editorial readership in Table 1, the p value was calculated using the *chi-square test.* The p value for differences between two means (averages) is calculated using the *t-test.* The p value for differences between more than two means is calculated using the *f-test.*

More Sophisticated Tools

There is another statistic, called a *correlation coefficient,* which is used explicitly to measure the degree of association between two variables. A simple example would be the association between circulation gains of daily newspapers in the United States and the population change in each newspaper's home county. One would reasonably expect circulation to be dependent to some degree upon the population that could conceivably receive a daily newspaper. The correlation coefficient states quantitatively what the degree of relationship is.

The correlation coefficient is a number that can range from −1.00 to +1.00 If the relationship between two variables yields a positive correlation coefficient, then as one variable increases, the other variable tends to increase also. Two other points about the correlation coefficient: First, if it is close to .00, there is probably no relationship between the two variables under consideration. And second, a p value also is calculated on the correlation coefficient, which tells you how much faith you can have in the number given for the correlation between the two variables.

In the example just used, the relationship between circulation and population, the correlation is + .32 ($p < .001$).

Regression

The correlation coefficient also is used in *regression,* which is one form of statistical prediction. Prediction here means that based on fairly consistent and stable occurrences or observations in the past, one feels relatively safe about making projections about, or *predicting,* the unknown similar relationships in the future. Order is assumed to be operating.

Prediction is used on a very unsophisticated level in everyday life. For instance, if I have received my evening newspaper at six p.m. every day for the past five years, I predict that it will be on my front porch tomorrow at six p.m.

Now, go back to the example of circulation and the number of households: Suppose that in a moderate sized metropolitan area, a few new industries have decided to set up headquarters and manufacturing. The metro council has projected that as a result, population will increase significantly in the next 10 years. New houses will need to be built to accommodate this growth. If the daily newspaper knows the metro council's projection of growth, the daily newspaper can calculate how much they might reasonably expect their circulation to increase, all other things being equal, in the next 10 years. Plans for alterations in press runs

Table 1

Readership of Editorials

	Age*		Education*		
Read Editorials:	**18-34 years of age**	**35 years or older**	**Less than college completed**	**College completed**	**Total**
Regularly	28%	49%	39%	58%	43%
Sometimes	59%	40%	48%	39%	46%
Never	13%	11%	14%	4%	12%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(n=194)	(n=455)	(n=516)	(n=142)	(n=649)

*(p less than .05)

may be in order, arrangements with newsprint suppliers may be warranted, circulation areas and advertising zones may have to be re-structured, etc. The newspaper used the statistical technique of regression to predict its probable changes in circulation due to population growth.

In this example, regression has been used as a planning tool. But before it could be used as a planning tool it had to adequately explain some kind of activity—in this instance, circulation change was the activity and it was adequately explained by the number of households.

Frequently, the thing one wishes to know about is not merely a function of one variable, but of more than one. In the example of circulation and the number of households, the predictive power would be improved if we acccounted for the fact that some metro areas have more than one daily newspaper. Given two metro areas with about the same number of households, one served by just one daily newspaper and the other being served by two daily newspapers, it would stand to reason that these three newspapers probably do not have equivalent circulation. Newspaper circulation is thus better explained by both the number of households and the competitive situation. We have just entered the realm of multivariate analysis.

Very simply, the basis of multivariate analysis is this: a thing is better explained by more than one variable. Hence the name, *multi* (many, or more than one) *variate* (variables). Regression still would be used in this example, but a different version of regression (multiple regression) would be used in order to take into account both variables: number of households and the competitive situation.

Summary

This discussion has presented an overview of the research process, focusing on a few of the more important research concepts and a few of the more interesting and intricate research tools. It has provided some information that will make you a better consumer of research. You should feel more comfortable both about asking questions of research and about commissioning research.

When commissioning research to answer your research question, however, keep in mind that other people have probably asked the same substantive questions. It could be beneficial to know how they went about getting the answer, and what the answer was. It is not always advisable to "re-invent the wheel." It is advisable, however, to make additions to the wheel that has already been invented. To this end, the ANPA News Research Bibliography (Reports No. 3 and No. 22) can be of assistance. It contains published and private results of many research projects, and can aid in the search for answers. ■

Have You Read . . . ?

"Business Coverage is Getting Better" by Ernest Hynds, **Journalism Quarterly,** Summer 1980.

National survey of daily newspapers finds that they are more aware of need for business coverage and are devoting more space to it.

"Daily Newspaper Non-Readers: Why They Don't Read" by Paula Poindexter, **Journalism Quarterly,** Winter 1979.

Analysis of non-readers in nine Eastern cities shows that there are two distinct subgroups of non-readers.

"Using a Decision Model To Evaluate Newspaper Features Systematically" by Robin Cobbey and Maxwell McCombs, **Journalism Quarterly,** Autumn 1979.

This article provides the technical and statistical details needed by researchers to implement the decision model outlined in ANPA News Research Report No. 4.

"Newspaper Reading in Two Towns" by Eugene Shaw and Daniel Riffe, **Journalism Quarterly,** Autumn 1979.

Surveys in two Tennessee communities show distinct difference in attention paid to local news and find that demographics are not equally good predictors in both towns. ■

Editorial Page Readership

While the editorial and opinion pages may not top the list of readers' interest, these pages do fill a key niche in the total package of content delivered by the daily newspaper, according to an extensive review of the research literature completed at Syracuse University's Communication Research Center. Commissioned by the National Conference of Editorial Writers, this review by Elsa Mohn and Maxwell McCombs appears in the Winter 1980-81 issue of *The Masthead*.

The place of the editorial and opinion pages in the overall pattern of newspaper readership is documented in these eight major findings:

- Better than one-third of the newspaper's audience are "regular" readers of the editorial and opinion pages in their daily newspaper, almost three-fourths "usually" read the editorial and opinion pages, and about nine out of 10 have read them at one time or another.

- Age is the only demographic characteristic which consistently distinguishes readers and nonreaders of the editorial and opinion pages.

- The strongest motivation for reading the editorial and opinion pages is "To feel I am participating in current events," followed by "To keep up with latest events," "To determine what is important," "To use in discussions with my friends," "To help me make decisions on issues," "To strengthen my arguments on issues" and "To help me form opinions about things going on around me."

- The editorial and opinion pages rank in the middle in terms of the readership of daily newspaper content. The types of content that are better read than the editorial and opinion pages are general news (national and international news, hard news), local and state news and the Sunday/daily magazine section. Sports and the tv/entertainment/arts news are equally likely to receive higher or lower readership than the editorial and opinion pages. The editorial and opinion pages are generally better read than the lifestyle/food/special sections and business news.

- Readership of editorial and opinion page items has a cumulative relationship to readership of other content in the newspaper. Daily newspaper readers who are very interested in reading items on the editorial and opinion pages are also very interested in reading about politics, local government news and national and international news.

- Editorial cartoons and the letters from readers are the best read items on the editorial and opinion pages. They are followed in popularity by the newspaper's own editorial position. The columnists have the smallest readership base.

- The four components of the editorial and opinion pages—the newspaper's editorial position, letters from readers, editorial cartoons and columnists—have somewhat distinct demographic audiences.

- Readership of an editorial page item does not vary with either the amount of space allocated to it or its geographic scope. However, when asked about their preferences, readers overwhelmingly chose editorial and opinion page content that addressed local affairs. ■